

Republican congressman troubled by Obama's lack of 'voice' on human rights

<http://www.energypublisher.com/article.asp?id=37126>

“Today Secretary Clinton is in Vietnam for ASEAN meetings. Initial news reports indicate that she raised human rights concerns in her meeting with the Foreign Minister and afterwards with journalists. However, a New York Times story today pointed out that the timing of her comments on these sensitive issues ‘suggested that she wanted to make her point and move on.’ If the administration is truly concerned about human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam, they would take the concrete step of placing Vietnam back on the Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) list, as has been recommended by the bipartisan **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** and the U.S. House of Representatives.

“Leonard Leo, chair **USCIRF**, rightly points out that Vietnam’s human rights record has only improved when its ‘feet were held to the fire.’ Leo continued, ‘but once Vietnam, with U.S. help, joined the World Trade Organization in 2007, religious freedom and human rights advocates have experienced waves of arrests,’ Leo said. Waves of arrests from our ‘friend’ in Southeast Asia?

“Or consider North Korea. Without question, this country is one of the darkest places on the globe. More than 200,000 North Koreans - including children - are being held in political prison camps. It is estimated that between 400,000 and one million people have died in these camps, having been worked to death or starved to death.